



AN ULTRAMODERN PORTRAYAL OF SITA IN AMISH TRIPATHY'S NOVEL

'SITA: THE WARRIOR OF MITHILA' - A STUDY

Dr. Rajbir Singh

Assistant Professor, Govt. College Bhiwani.

ABSTRACT

This paper delineates the portrayal of Sita in Amish Tripathy's novel 'Sita: The Warrior of Mithila' and her relevance in the 'Ramayana' where Sita is depicted as a devoted wife, daughter and a silent visionary. She is always behind the customs and traditions which may be relevant in that particular context. She is full of love and compassion and her patience can be judged with the fact that she accepts meekly what is imposed on her. She remains as pure as Gangajal in spite of so many hardships and ordeal in her life. Religion is every thing to him. Tripathy's Sita is endowed with extraordinary courage, wisdom, devotion, love, compassion, martial art, war strategy and physical strength. She is ready to break all the 'Man Centred shackles'. She is able to rule, enjoy her strength and independence. Amish has his own vision and thinking which brings her out in the 'Forest of Enchantments' where she presents her in bold terms. Coming out in new horizon has different connotations-Sita not only puts her feet boldly in an alien world but she remains virtuous and optimistic in different unforeseen circumstances. She is a torch bearer for the whole class by representing her strong values, patience, devotion, military art and novel thinking.

KEYWORDS: Sita, Devotion, Visionary, Warrior, Leader

Indian Mythology is a unique blending of tradition, ritual and custom at large. Amish Tripathy has achieved wonder by redesigning the aged old narrative. In the great Indian epic the 'Ramayana' we find that the whole story revolves around Lord Rama and mother Sita. Lord Rama being an epitome of patriarchal society is always discussed as per our own convenience but the 'Better half' of Lord Rama remains lopsided. Amish Tripathy in his book 'Sita: the Warrior of Mithila' redefines the old aged mythology giving it a novel shape and sequence. Shashi Tharoor aptly says,

"Amish is a fresh new voice in Indian Writings- stepped in myth and history with a fine eye for detailed and compelling narrative style."

Sita is an embodiment of patience and purity. She reposes her faith and fidelity in Lord Rama. She is always ready to accept the customs of society but this modern retelling of Sita different from 'Ramcharitmanas' written by Tulsidas really projects Sita virtuous, loyal, compassionate and devoted. Amish's Sita is unbending warrior and a strategic leader. Tripathy has attempted to exploit a comparative technique to focus on the retelling of traditional vs modern. Her Sita is not an ultimate sufferer of commitment but an independent warrior, strategic and feminist lady. In fact, she has become a torch bearer to the marginals who inspires and empowers the weaker sex in this modern society.

We find Sita a strategic warrior² in Tripathy's 'Sita: the Warrior of Mithila'. In the ancient epics she is shown armless and untrained but this Sita is projected boldly in different colours and shades. It is a well acclaimed fact that Sita is full of vigour and vitality. She is full of bravery and her capacity can be seen

in these lines, " She drew her knife from the scabbard tied horizontally to the small of her back. She closed her eyes. She could not afford to look around the tree and expose herself. She would probably be shot instantly. Her eyes were useless. She had to rely on her ears. There were great archers who could shoot arrows relying on sound. But very few could throw knives at the source of sound. Sita was one of those few." (Tripathy page 18) As a seasoned warrior she is able to take different tasks simultaneously. She looks more and more intelligent and prudent throughout the novel. Her leadership qualities are soaked in courage and intellect. Amish vividly describes her abilities of hunting the man-eater when she says, "my apologies, noble beast. But it is either you or the villager under my protection. The tiger's head dropped. Never to rise again. May your soul find purpose, once again." (Tripathy page 07) No doubt, she is a caring leader who puts her life in peril.

She is always ready to lend her ears to the grievances of subjects. She knows that this interaction will be resulted in fruitfulness. The people will repose their faith in her loyalty. They are happy under the moral support and able guidance of Sita who is committed, unbending, full of commitment, brave and able leader. In fact, she is a magnetic force who collects all the metallic elements within.

She is full of novel thoughts and sentiments. She is never hesitant to adopt new techniques and ideas. She always believes in something new and extraordinary for the sake of common people. Under the able guidance of Sita the people are happy and confident and are ready to sacrifice every thing to their reverent leader and in return Sita is never hesitant to extend her welfare schemes to the people. The old houses of the slum dwellers to be demolished and the new houses to be given to

the people. She says, "... permanent houses be built for the poor on the same land. These houses, built with the money given by Malyaputras, would be given to the poor free of cost." (Tripathy page 71)

Thus it would suffice to say that Amish Tripathy has achieved wonder by redesigning and retelling the ancient narrative. He has infused blood and flesh in the dry bone of this mythical narrative .

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